Funds to aid foreign countries

1471. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is planning to set up an independent body to fund and aid foreign countries in various fields of activities;

(b) if so, the basic guidelines under which the body is set up;

(c) the total budget for the Agency being set up;

(d) the yardsticks under which the funding would be done to the foreign countries; and

(e) by when it is likely to begin operations?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) Yes. Finance Minister in his budget speech for FY 2007-08 had announced that Government propose to establish the India International Development Cooperation Agency (IIDCA) to bring all activities relating to development cooperation under one umbrella. The Ministries of External Affairs, Finance and Commerce and other stakeholders will be represented on IIDCA. Presently, Ministry of External Affairs is processing the proposal to seek the approval of the Cabinet.

PM's visit to China

1472. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prime Minister of India visited China in January, 2008 after nearly a gap of fifteen years, to discuss the bilateral trade and other issues of mutual interest with their leaders;

(b) if so, the total value of Indo-China trade in 1992 as compared to actual trade figures in 2007-08 and target set by 2010;

(c) whether India largely exports raw materials while importing finished goods from China; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Prime Minister paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 13 to 15 January 2008. The last visit by an Indian Prime Minister to China was in June 2003. Prime Minister exchanged views on the further development of bilateral relations, including in the area of trade.

(b) to (d) India-China bilateral trade in 1992 was US$ 338 million. In 2007, it reached US$ 38.69 billion according to Chinese statistics. The main Indian exports to China were iron ore, raw cotton, machinery, copper, organic chemicals and plastic. Raw materials constituted over 50% of India's exports to China in 2007. The main Chinese exports into India were fertilizers, iron & steel and electrical machinery. During PM's visit, it was decided to increase the bilateral trade target for 2010 from 40 billion US dollars to 60 billion US dollars. PM also conveyed that further efforts should be made to address the trade imbalance and to ensure growth on a sustainable and long-term basis.